

ODDITY: Volume I

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White Panther

The white panther pads,
A light against the grey of winter,
Stalking through the cemetery,
Walking there alongside me.

The white panther slinks between
Sight and sound.
The kind of pleas that come from felids
Aft and 'fore the stony hats.

The white panther follows me a ways.
In fright he flees from bellowing cars,
And into an alley he stealthily slips,
A few parting words upon his lips.

Daybreak

Day breaks open over the halls of men.

The Yolk sags its way slowly down,
coating everything the light touches
in a thin sheen of optimism.

Devoid of shadow,
the morning marches merrily on

Rising with the sun, I reach out for that daybreak smile,

Yet my hands return empty.

Instead, they're fill with
apprehension, apathy, and anhedonia

But I drag my leaden feet to the door,
And out the door,
and past the commuters,
and up to the timeclock.

Better clock-in
says the manager's stare.

Little White Pill

Every morning as the sun crests
over the hoity-toity housing up the hill,
I choke one down.
You could set a clock by it.

A bitter vanguard
Fighting- tooth and nail- the forces of
madness and confusion.
The disputed territory?
Control.

Without that foothold, I slip into ever-deepening darkness
full of wailing and gnashing of teeth,
where neither Lord nor Savior may venture.

A little white pill
stands between me and elemental unease.
I choke it down.
And doing so smile a sad smirk

We both know I'll have to do this-
every morning of every day.
Forever.

Twitch

An involuntary spasm of the muscles;
Correlated negatively with comfort
and consciously choosing to flail like a weirdo;

Calls to mind the sense that one is a marionette
and some hidden master plucks your puppet chords;
Unobtrusive to external view
Jarring for the unstill fidgeteer

Business as usual,
One moment...

And then,
a lightning strike to the nerves...

JOLT!

Regrets

I hope I don't live
to regret having lived.
Some things are gonna suck,
though,
and for a long while,
but never so much
that "on" is too far to go.

As it so happens,
(don't get your hopes up)
once in awhile
shit just comes up exactly that...

Shit.
When you're up against an army of shitty luck,
things don't get better or worse-
they implode.

Life's hard; Get a fucking helmet

I don't regret living.
As banal and superficially meaningless as
that is to say,
I feel it's an accomplishment.
There's a never-ending onslaught
of negativity permeating reality-
at least there is from the right

(wrong)
perspective.
daily,
hourly,
minutely...
ad infinitum.

Regretting the past is cake-
Get ahead of the game
and regret what's yet to come.
It's gonna be worse.
Take chances on
whatever little things in life
give you shelter...-
long shot,
no shot-
makes no difference.
Just try.
Worst case scenario:
Everything's still shit.

Anhedonia

Flat,

Like an oboe's joyless ode.

No ups or downs,

No peaks and valleys,

Just the outstretched blank expanse of human emptiness
onto which life is projected.

Flat,

like a surfboard,

but not the surf.

I feel no crest, no crash against the shore.

I am the sleeping hermit crab,

content to exist for a while then scurry off to find a new home

Flat,

like your deadpan stare.

Empty eyes and emptier conscience.

Was it on you I spent the last of my feelings?

Somehow I doubt it,

but where else could they have gone?

The Paperboy

Paper boy on his route.

Early morning inward rolling fog.

Bringing good news to his subscribers

He got the job in high school,
with only a bicycle,
he kept half the graduating class informed

Been delivering papers around four years
and he's not stopping anytime
soon at least-
Chronically reelected...
Four-Twenty more.

2:15am

Quarter-past two and the grinding mill's still going strong
must be nice to be a Buddhist monk
knowing how to shut down that internal monologue
with little beside some quiet and discipline.

I'm on empty
but my engine whirrs along

That's what I get for keeping my foot on the dead man switch

A head fulla thoughts
and nowhere to put them...
Can you hire a cleaning lady for between the ears?

Malcolm Gladwell famously said it takes
ten thousand hours to master a particular task,
I doubt my time opposite various shrinks, counselors, brain tinkers
meets his criteria,
but you can bet your ass it gets pretty close,
considering I average an hour a week with the talker,
an hour a month with the doctor,
and a week-long stint in a funny farm every now and then.

Since eight years young, in and out of offices.

Goddamn if it doesn't add up-

not ten thousand,

but definitely several hundred hours.

At this rate, I'll lock it down by middle-age,

if I can make it there.

It's three AM

and here I sit,

cigarette lit.

Two stray cats before me,

nobody to my right.

The grasses grow tall in the empty moonlight.

Rio

If you should find yourself, by chance,
in Rio, West Virginia,
(pronounced RYE-oh)
and you happen to be traveling down the only road there
keep an eye out
for the “Free Library.”

It seems redundant,
but considering the gas it’d cost
to get to a real library,
“Free” seems appropriate.

And if you’re ever in Rio,
look up that old guru I talked to
about the chaotic forces of existence
one afternoon in the lysergic sunshine.
And smoke a spliff with his son
beneath the old spruce tree by the pond.

If you’re ever in Rio, West Virginia,
check in on that memory of mine
so I can be sure it hasn’t gone away.

A Little Piece

I found a little peace

somewhere

between free

and incarcerated

I found a little peace

somewhere

slathered in paint

and wanderlust

I lost a little piece

long ago

in a different world

in a different life

I've got a little piece

I'm working on

perfecting it so I

can be better.

I found a little piece

inside myself

it was dying but I

breathed a little life into it

I call that little piece

hope.

More Ruminations On A White Cat

A white feline appears
from behind a gravestone,

and saunters toward me unafraid.
Affectionately it rubs against my left foot.

It slinks and slithers
between my legs.

It follows
and mews.

lamenting mice lost,
and lecturing on birds found.

Diatribes it speaks to me,
But I can only nod.

I pluck it from the blacktop
into the safety of friendly arms.

A white feline purrs
as I scratch its chin gingerly.